DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 078 017 TM 002 831

AUTHOR	Eastmond, Jefferson N.
TITLE	Need Assessment: Winnowing Expressed Concerns for Critical Needs. A Training Manual.
INSTITUTION	Utah State Board of Education, Salt Lake City.; World-Wide Education and Research Inst., Salt Lake City, Utah.
PUB DATE	Apr 69
NOTE	29p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Educational Needs; *Educational Planning; Program Descriptions; *Program Evaluation; Public Opinion; Surveys

ABSTRACT

A procedure is given for determining various concerns for the identification of priority needs or important problems. Chapters deal with procedures for harvesting educational concerns, illustrations of the systematic harvesting of concerns, concerns classification and analysis, and conducting the need assessment. A diagram of the procedure for concerns analysis and need assessment is provided in an appendix. (KM)

ED 078017

This PLANNING AID
provided by the
Planning Unit
Utah State Board of Education

Creating Desirable Change through Planning

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Dee K. Richards
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER

NEED ASSESSMENT:

Winnowing Expressed Concerns for Critical Needs

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

A TRAINING MANUAL

by Jefferson N. Eastmond
World-wide Education & Research Inst.

Reproduced through Special Permission by the
UTAH EDUCATION PLANNING UNIT

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

TM 002 831

ED 078017

NEED ASSESSMENT: WINNOWING EXPRESSED CONCERNS FOR CRITICAL NEEDS

REPRODUCED BY THE
UTAH EDUCATIONAL PLANNING UNIT
UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
University Club Building
136 East South Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Jefferson N. Eastmond

for

I M P R O V E

Inservice Management Programs Revitalizing Organizations via Education

TM 002 831

The copyright for this publication is held by
the World-Wide Education and Research Institute
574 East 2nd South Street, Salt Lake City, Utah

April, 1969

Basic to the preparation of any plan is the recognition that a need exists for at least considering the feasibility of undertaking a study. This initial step, recognizing the need for a plan, is of prime importance.

--Le Breton and Henning[1]

---

[1]Preston P. LeBreton and Dale A. Henning, Planning Theory, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1961. p. 61.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION 1

Chapter 2. PROCEDURES FOR HARVESTING EDUCATIONAL CONCERNS 3

Chapter 3. ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE SYSTEMATIC HARVESTING OF CONCERNS 6

Chapter 4. CONCERNS CLASSIFICATION AND ANALYSIS . . . 13

Chapter 5. CONDUCTING THE NEED ASSESSMENT 19

APPENDIX 24

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

> In a democracy the extent and the effectiveness of civil governmental planning depends in large part on the awareness, positive interest, and desires of the body politic and their representatives. In turn, these factors relate to the general attitudes, basic motivications, and broad ethical convictions of the people and their culture. The objectives of city and regional planning represent indirectly the philosophy of those for whom it is intended--combined, filtered, and expressed through the many-faceted institutional structure of the democratic process. At the present time, because of the absence of expressed or specifically implied objectives, inadequate budgetry support, and limitations of comprehensive analysis, planning, personnel must often reach "technical" conclusions on a more philosophical basis than scientific.
>
> --Melvin C. Branch
> Planning Aspects and Applications

This booklet focuses on some of the preliminary procedures to be followed in the problem-solving process. It is designed to alert the educator to the implications of his or his district's decisions. It raises the question as to whether the focus of effort is on the most critical of problems. It also provides some means by which one can measure accuracy, validity, criticality, and feasibility of the identified need which has given rise to the problem considerations.

If the contents of this booklet are successfully mastered, a number of benefits should accrue to the educator and his school or school district. What is proposed here is a process to be followed in winnowing various concerns for the identification of priority needs or important problems.

Essentially, it entails what is technically referred to as an environmental analysis and a need assessment. Sometimes it is referred to as a requirements analysis. Its effective use can help the educator to:

1. Distinguish genuine problems from peripheral symptoms or synthetic sub-problems.

2. Focus efforts on problems of significance instead of minor problems or trivia.

3. Make all actions and decisions consistent by providing an overall focus for the school's or the district's activities.

4. Improve the efficiency of the school's or the district's total problem-solving process, and thus improve the possibilities to resolve some problems that have previously defied solution.

In addition to the foregoing direct benefits of the process outlined in this booklet, there are other advantages to be accrued. The following represent some of these "spin off" benefits. That is, they are benefits not directly a product of the process itself, but may be usefully obtained over a period of time through consistent and systematic attention. These include:

1. The development of an operational philosophy of education.

2. A realistic set of policies that are consistent with a philosophy of education as well as with current knowledge and technology.

3. An amassing of a large amount of useful problem-solving information.

Chapter 2. PROCEDURES FOR HARVESTING EDUCATIONAL CONCERNS

> There is no hiding place from the forces which turn today into yesterday and make past preparations for tomorrow of little use.
>
> --National Education Association
> -1968-

An expressed concern may be defined as "a verbalized care, a trouble, a distress," or an articulated "uncertainty or apprehension." Thus, a collection of educational concerns would constitute a number of statements, observations, collections of data or other kinds of expressions of uncertainty or apprehension about education that have been gleaned from individuals or organizations. Needless to say, these concerns may represent a "hodge-podge" of expressions. Each concern will represent the value orientation and the factual perceptions of the originators. But these educational concerns, as defined herein, are the unprocessed, unrefined expressions harvested by an institution in the preliminary stages of a need assessment or the identification of priority needs or problems.

A need is defined herein as "a discrepancy between what is, and what is desired." In other words, it is an urgent requirement--defined within a value system--of something essential or desirable that is lacking. Needs, therefore, represent the refined expressions of concerns that have been processed or filtered through a consistent value and factual system. They represent the essential focus for problem definition.

Emerging out of a complex environment are many expressions of concern. Recognition of these, of course, dpeends upon the sensing

mechanism and the value orientation in the identification process. These concerns are various expressions of needs or problems. They are the unrefined, unevaluated expressions that emanate from individuals or agencies.

The first step, therefore, in problem solving or planning is the recognition or harvesting of concerns. The entire process begins when the concern is sensed. Thus, the basis of any plan or action must first come from the recognition that a concern exists. It is after this basic step that its validity, importance, and feasibility are assessed in order to determine whether or not it is a priority need.

School leadership must constantly be alert and sensitive to ideas, insights, and expressions of concern. The prudent school system, rather than await volunteer expressions of need, will frequently or continually conduct a systematic search for concerns and ideas for their amelioration. While many persons in a school system have a responsibility for being receptive to expressions of concern, it is the top level leadership that is in the most strategic position to generate ideas or identify concern.

Commenting on this strategic position of leadership in this function, Le Breton and Henning have stated:

> There is no substitute for the executive who has vision, sensitivity, ingenuity and initiative. Even where others possess these qualities to a greater extent than he, they lack the formal position and authority, and the full knowledge of the executive. The experiences and contacts which are part of the day-to-day routine of an executive put him in a unique position to observe, to study, and to judge reactions and trends. His personal association with other... executives as well as outside...associates on both an informal and formal basis allow him to test budding hypotheses of his own. The availability of confidential...information allows him an insight into problem areas and general management thinking not available to others. Furthermore, he is likely to be the person most concerned with planning, since this is his major responsiblity.[1]

[1]Preston P. Le Breton & Dale A. Henning, Planning Theory (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.): Prentice Hall, Inc., 1961. p. 74.

The identification of educational concerns, however, extends far beyond the school executive. It is the responsibility of all school personnel. Thus, a deliberate, strategic and widespread effort must be made periodically to identify educational concerns.

Experience thus far has shown that simply waiting for volunteer expressions of concern is grossly inadequate. This procedure does not provide a comprehensive overview of concerns and tends to accentuate the concerns of only the most vocal or of those who can exert political or other types of pressure. A more thorough and systematic procedure of need identification must be followed.

The systematic procedure most widely used for need identification consists of sever l elements. One of these calls for all educational personnel to be alerted and sensitive to the expression of educational concerns. These persons are invited to channel these to appropriate receiving centers. In other words there must be a creation of sensing mechanisms for the school system. Some of the most frequently used techniques for harvesting concerns include:

Polling public opinion;

Ccnducting public meetings that focus on the expression of educational concerns;

Periodically setting up small discussion groups of staff members to evoke educational concerns;

Bringing in external consultants or task forces to conduct surveys, audits, etc.

Analyzing educational data such as test results, student attrition, lack of pupil progress, etc.

Conducting interviews with key educators or laymen.

Chapter 3. ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE SYSTEMATIC HARVESTING OF CONCERNS

> Though there may be many paths about the foot of the mountain, yet when the top is reached, the same moon is seen.
>
> --Old Japanese Proverb

Various educational agencies may conduct the systematic search for concerns in different ways. Procedures and techniques vary widely, and undoubtedly some ingenius methods are yet to be discovered and utilized. As a kind of "rule-of-thumb" set of criteria it is sometimes helpful to examine the total procedure in terms of the following:

The overall procedure must:

1. Provide for ease of administration. That is, the administration must not be complicated nor require extensive training of personnel.

2. Truly sample all sectors of the target population. In meeting this criterion one might ask:

   Have all groups and segments of the population been given an opportunity to participate?

3. Allow for coverage of all possible areas of concern. In meeting this criterion, one might ask:

   Have the instruments and procedures been sufficiently comprehensive that the broadest possible array of topics and concerns have been tapped?

4. Provide for convenience of respondents.

5. Obtain a significant percentage of responses.

6. Elicit clear and unambiguous responses.

7. Collect responses quickly.

8. Obtain valid responses; that is, the responses must reflect accurately the respondents' meanings and intents.

9. Secure reliable responses; that is, assure that respondent would consistently produce essentially the same response if the same stimulus were presented to him repeatedly.

In order to illustrate the procedures and techniques used in the systematic harvesting of concerns, the experiences of a school district as well as state education agency are presented. The reader is encouraged to look for the similarities in both efforts, as well as looking for the strengths and weaknesses in each technique as well as the overall procedure.

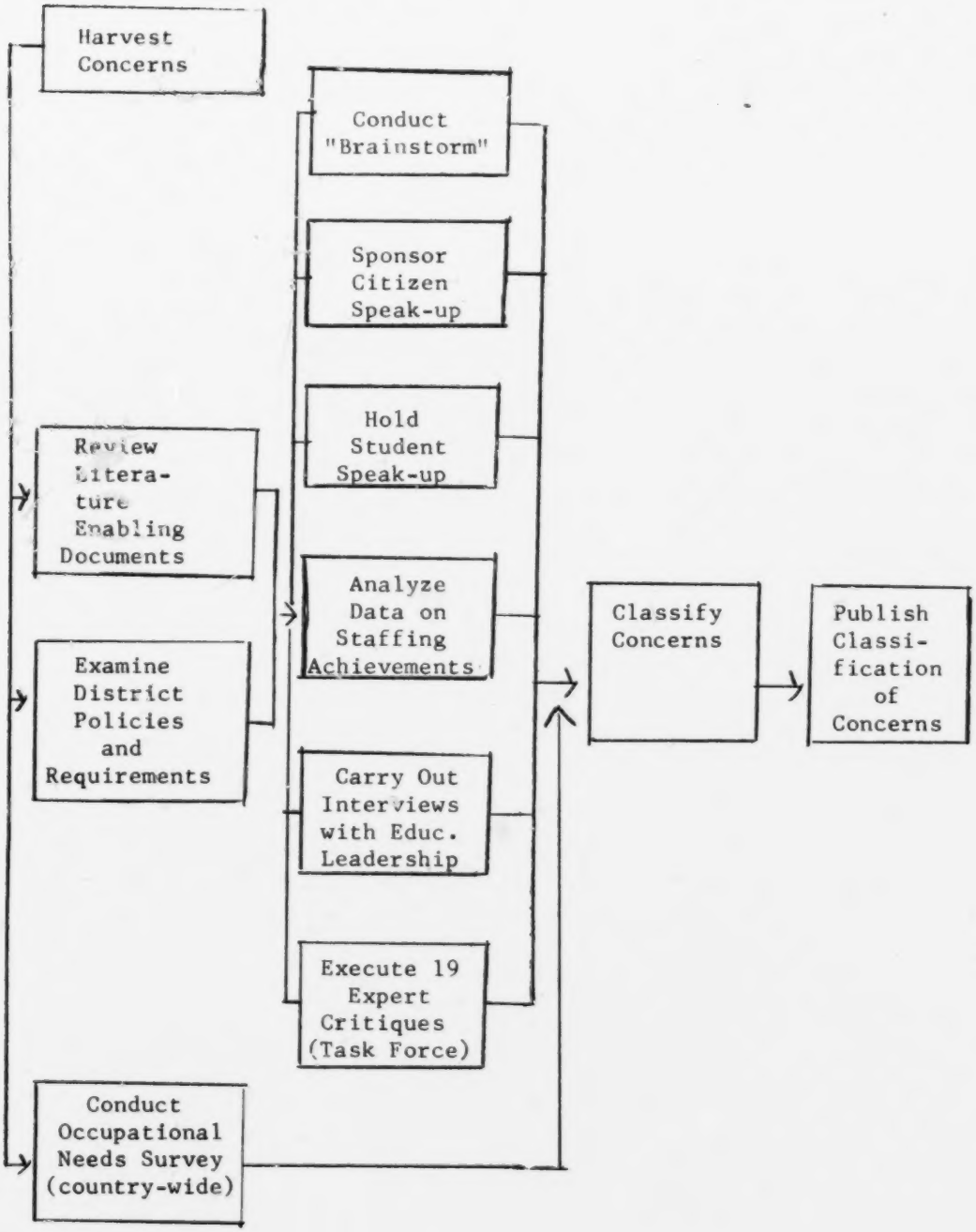
I. PROCEDURES IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT

As an example of an organized effort in the harvesting of educational concerns, the Fresno City Unified School District of California, has used a number of techniques. These are shown graphically in Figure 1. Those techniques that are not fully apparent from the titles in Figure 1 are described in the following paragraphs.

Speak Up. This procedures was designed to encourage citizens to express their perceptions of needed improvements in the schools with a minimum of structure to limit such expressions. A basic organization of discussion groups was developed within the community and five samples of different question sets were used to motivate groups to express concern in a pilot program. Several Parent Teacher Association discussion leaders used each of the five types. An evaluation meeting with P.T.A. presidents and discussion leaders led to a condensed set of open-end questions for general use throughout the Speak-up program.

This procedure is essentially one of a polling of a population and in conducting "unmet needs conferences" from time to time. These conferences involve a considerable amount of representative public participation and call for effective planning. First inaugurated in New York State, the "unmet needs conference" has been described as follows:

Figure 1. GRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE USED FOR HARVESTING EDUCATIONAL CONCERNS IN THE FRESNO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



Briefly, an "unmet needs conference" consists of a large public meeting and the numerous small group discussions held simultaneously. Discussion in each group is cnetered on a common broad question such as "the needs of the schools." To insure that each person has an opportunity to contribute, everyone is asked to write down his thoughts on the topic under consideration prior to any discussion. The "unmet needs conference" reveals the depth and character of the public's interest in education. From the information supplied by the public at the conference, it is possible to learn what interest exists in the problems of the schools and the most fruitful grounds for cooperative attack on these problems by the school people and the public. It gives the public an opportunity to express to interested school people exactly what they feel the schools should be doing. To encourage groups of citizens to exchange ideas on the needs of the schools, awakens the public to the complexity of these needs and to the necessity for an organized, combined approach to them. At the same time that public thinking is being gauges, the conference technique builds public understanding.[2]

Brainstorm. Teachers and classified employees of the district were asked to participate in at least one "Brainstrom" session during a specified two-week period. This procedure is described as follows:

> Brainstorming is a technique of attacking specific problems in small discussion groups which aim to pile up ideas by withholding criticism or judgment of such ideas as they are initially produced. Research has clearly established that groups familar with a general problem can make very significant contributions in this manner. A group of outstanding teachers has agreed to serve as Brainstorm discussion leaders for the sessions you are asked to attend. The topic for these initial Brainstorm sessions is: "What are the needs which must be considered in planning a quality education program for all students and adults in Fresno for future years?"

---

[2]William R. Begg, Techniques for Study Groups Concerned with Unmet Needs, New York: Metropolitan School Study Council, 1947, pp. 2-5 Later summaries published by the Council in 1958.

Task Force Experts. This procedure places the focus on organizations and institutions such as teachers' associations, school patrons, colleges and universities, etc. Periodically, a kind of campaign is launched to extract statements of need from these sources.

In the case of Fresno a set of Product Specifications were developed as guides for specialists who will comprise the Task Force on the harvest of concerns. These specifications were given to qualified people identified for various specialist assignments. The assignments were committed by contract. Areas assigned in the Task Force effort included:

INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM (PROGRAMS AND SERVICES)

- Grouping, Instructional Patterns, Staffing and In-service Education
- Language-Arts (except Reading)
- Reading
- Mathematics
- Science
- Foreign Language
- Physical Education/Athletics
- Adult Education
- Special Education
- Student Personnel Activities
- Health Services
- Cultural Arts
- Vocational Education
- Guidance Testing, Student Records
- Social Science

SOCIAL-URBAN TEAM (PHYSICAL AND HUMAN FACTORS)

- Urban Physical Factors
- Mexican-American Special Needs
- Negro Special Needs
- Compensatory Education

II. PROCEDURE OF A STATE EDUCATION AGENCY

As an illustration of the systmatic harvesting of concerns on the state-wide level the experience of the Utah State Board of Education

is cited. The specific techniques and methods employed are shown graphically in Figure 2. While most of the elements in Figure 2 are apparent from the titles, a brief explanation of the less familiar techniques is offered in the following paragraphs.

Delphi Technique. The Delphi technique is used to forecast the development and timing of future events. It relies primarily on the pooled expertise of a number of selected authorites. It has been described as follows by one observer:

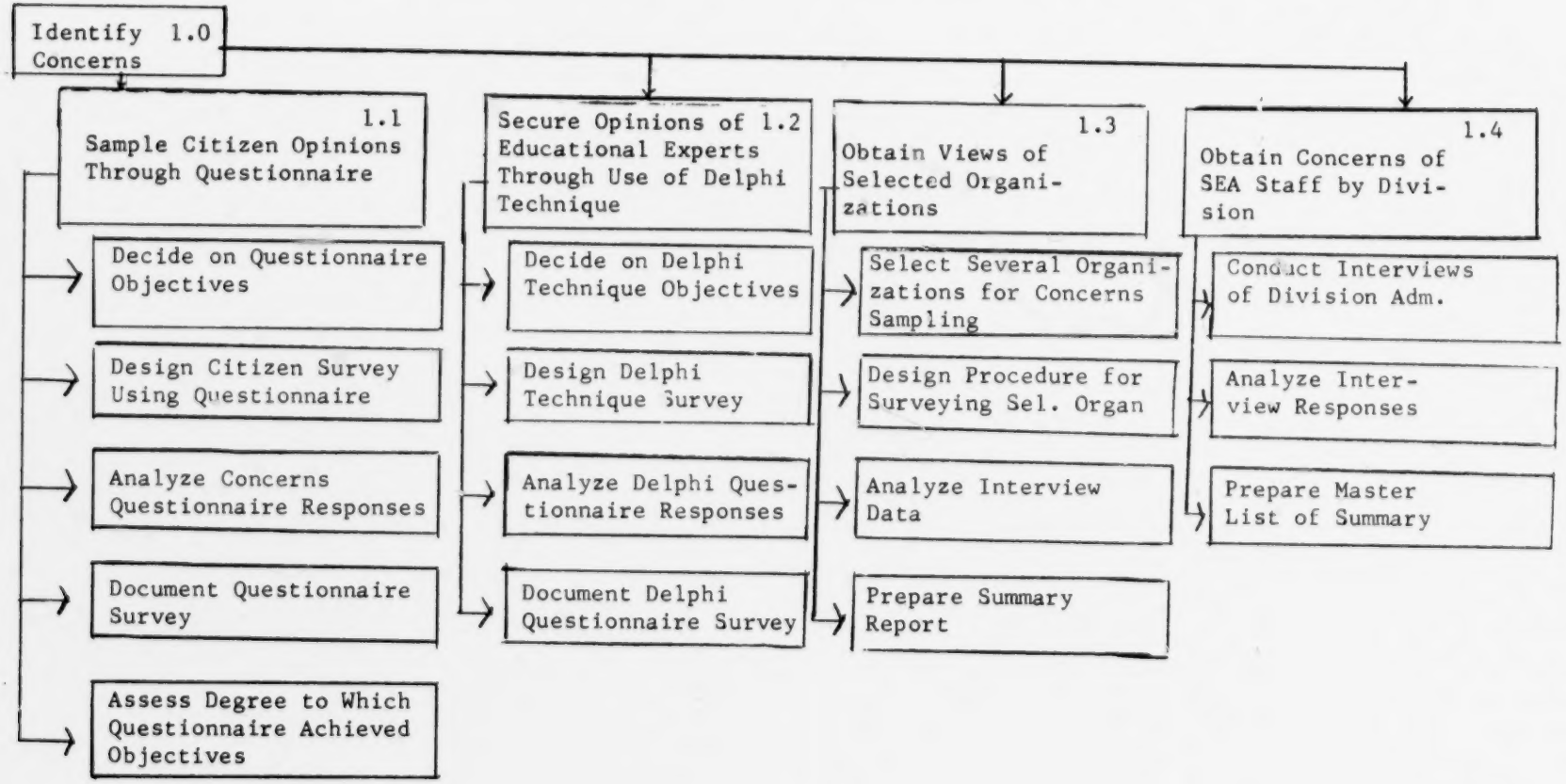
> There has lately sprung up a specific interest in the very mechanism of foreseeing the future. One study, conducted by Theodore J. Gordon and Dr. Olaf Helmer under the auspices of the RAND Corporation in California, used a systematic approach called the "Delphi technique" in questioning 82 experts in various fields about the long-range future. The respondents were sent a sequence of questionnaires, each one based on results of the last one, and each man therefore had the opportunity to change his views as information and the views of other respondents were given to him.[1]

After the various educational concerns have been harvested, they must be given a winnowing treatment before the need satisfaction or problem-solving process begins. Let us now examine the next step, which is concerned with the classification and analysis of these concerns.

---

[1]Don Fabum, The Dynamics of Change, Kaiser Foundation, p. 21, Foreseeing the Unforeseeable.

Figure 2. PROCEDURE USED BY THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION IN HARVESTING EDUCATIONAL CONCERNS


Identify Concerns 1.0
1.1 Sample Citizen Opinions Through Questionnaire
Decide on Questionnaire Objectives
Design Citizen Survey Using Questionnaire
Analyze Concerns Questionnaire Responses
Document Questionnaire Survey
Assess Degree to Which Questionnaire Achieved Objectives
Secure Opinions of 1.2 Educational Experts Through Use of Delphi Technique
Decide on Delphi Technique Objectives
Design Delphi Technique Survey
Analyze Delphi Questionnaire Responses
Document Delphi Questionnaire Survey
1.3 Obtain Views of Selected Organizations
Select Several Organizations for Concerns Sampling
Design Procedure for Surveying Sel. Organ
Analyze Interview Data
Prepare Summary Report
1.4 Obtain Concerns of SEA Staff by Division
Conduct Interviews of Division Adm.
Analyze Interview Responses
Prepare Master List of Summary

Chapter 4. CONCERNS CLASSIFICATION AND ANALYSIS

> We are concerned with the values, attitudes and actions of government decision makers, with political resources and their use, with political symbols and their manipulation. Moreover, in an effort to determine what factors operate to shape various sets of alternatives and what factors lead to the selection of one alternative over another, we are concerned also with the political context.[1]
>
> -- Masters and Pettitt

Prior to an analysis of the harvested concerns, it is advantageous to classify them. In the classification of concerns, it may be helpful to assure objectivity and validity if the following precautions are taken:

1. Do not force the concerns into any preconceived framework or system of categories.
2. Utilize relatively disinterested and therefore unbiased personnel--external to the effort--in carrying out the classification.

The simplest and most frequently used method of classification consists of writing each concern on a 3" x 5" card and then sorting out these cards into stacks where they seem to fit because of content relationships.

I. THE CLASSIFICATION OF CONCERNS IN FRESNO

The card sorting procedure described in the foregoing paragraph was used with the concerns harvested in the Fresno City project of 1968. The emergent categories for classification were:

---

[1] Nicholas A. Masters & Lawrence K. Pettitt, "Some Changing Patterns in Educational Policy Making." Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 2, No. 2. Spring, 1966. p. 258.

1. Ethnic Minority Needs. If a single matter of overriding concern exists it must be related to the needs of Fresno's minority groups. Recent national events, pressures by the federal and state government, and stated concerns of teachers and interested community groups emphasize the primacy of this concern for the district. It is not reasonable to consider the problems of ethnic imbalance as solely the responsibility of the schools, but the schools must nonetheless face this problem as one of their major concerns.

2. Communications. A constant thread of concern was exhibited throughout the Task Force, Speak-up, and Brainstorm reports, that involvement and communications channels be improved between the various levels of the school administration, and between the school system and the community as a whole, particularly with the minority community.

3. Clarification of Program Objectives. Generating some clearly stated objectives as determined by total staff with broad community involvement was a repeatedly expressed concern of the Task Force reports, school staff, and education leadership. The concerns frequently stressed that these objectives should be understood by all elements of the school-community, and that particular awareness be given to the participation of the minority community.

4. Staffing. Many concerns were expressed that were related to staff personnel. These were principally related to apprehensions about job descriptions, additional numbers of teachers and teacher aides, teacher turnover, and ethnic composition of the staff.

5. Evaluation and Measurement. The concern for an on-going evaluative program was expressed in two dimensions; the first pertaining to existing testing programs; the second about an on-going process of program evaluation involving staff, students and community.

6. In-service Professional Development. Many concerns pointed toward an expanded and revitalized program of teacher in-service training. Newly instituted innovative processes in teaching methodology as well as specific changes in curricular approach, such as new math and new English, have made retraining of experienced teachers necessary on a massive basis.

7. Curriculum. Many concerns were expressed in such curricular areas as reading, language, math, science, foreign language, social science, physical education, special education and cultural arts. Within each Task Force report was an analysis of learner needs (achievement deficiencies against a set of given standards) and operational or functional needs required to reduce learning deficiencies.

8. Instructional Methodology. Concerns were numerous relating to the desirability of flexible schedules, small discussion groups, teachers operating as adult helpers instead of lecturers. Independent study and research centers were cited as the kind of techniques of instructional methodology which were referred to as most effective in increasing the meaning of information received.

9. Vocational Education. It was repeatedly pointed out that schools should do more to provide job or career skills and business and industry should cooperate with the schools to bring this about. Nevertheless, other concerns stressed that vocational education needs to be viewed as a method of instruction and learning rather than as preparation for a specific job. It was further stated that vocational education should be a part of the program for all students and not just for those identified as non-academic.

10. Adult Education. Concerns emphasized community involvement and program expansion with courses in human relations, psychology, human behavior, and family life education; also a further expansion of the program with courses particularly designed for minority groups. Such courses, it

was pointed out, should emphasize consumer, health, civic, cultural, vocational, and leadership education.

11. Guidance-Counseling. Concerns favored the establishment of a comprehensive guidance program in the elementary grades and a shift in emphasis from remedial counseling to preventive counseling. Some apprehensions were that present counselor time tends to be consumed with proportionately few students with special academic or personal problems.

12. Finance, Organization and School Facilities. Many concerns and virtually every Task Force report mentioned either specific need for facility or financial support, or had implicit within it the need either for increased financial support or for reorganization to achieve maximum utilization of existing resources.

II. THE CONCERNS ANALYSIS

After the harvested concerns have been satisfactorily classified, it is necessary to analyze them. This process of analyzing concerns will provide a large depository of useful values, policies, and facts that are essential for the winnowing process that is to follow.[2] An example of the product from a concerns analysis is shown in Figure 3.

The concerns analysis has many other benefits. It should be carried out by a representative group of community residents. The analysis process itself should provide a stimulation and interaction that assists the group members in wrestling with basic issues and acquiring new insights. The group interaction, if properly organized, will allow one

[2]For a detailed description of the concerns analysis procedures, see Jefferson N. Eastmond's Developing and Operational Philosophy of Education, and Societal Trends and Factual Considerations for a Concerns Analysis (Salt Lake City: World-Wide Education and Research Institute. 1968).

ILLUSTRATION OF CONCERNS ANALYSIS

VALUES (What we believe)	FACTS (What is & what will be)	POLICIES (How we operate)
The district should be aware of how well all of its employees are performing the duties assigned them. There should be significant teacher involvement in evaluation.	Teachers accept the need for evaluation. Teachers feel the present form of evaluation is essentially negative, used for administrative purposes. Parents, students and total school staff do evaluate informally. It is particularly difficult for the principal in a large school to make realistic evaluations.	District policy says evaluation is to help people improve. Tenure teachers are evaluated every two years. Administrators alone do evaluation. The present evaluation of tenure teachers is of dubious value. It results in very little positive change. Persons doing evaluation have little training as evaluators.

CONCERN: "There is a need for a better evaluation of school personnel."

NEED (or problem) STATEMENT: A system of evaluation is needed that will uniformly and objectively examine the performance of district personnel and should provide opportunities to improve performance identified as inadequate.

idea to ignite another and thus elicit valuable information and group competence and unity.

The concerns analysis should attempt to penetrate at as deep a level as possible. This assures a focus on basic issues and relationships and opens the way for new and creative approaches to difficult and long-standing issues.

Chapter 5. CONDUCTING THE NEED ASSESSMENT

While it is futile to try to eliminate risk and questionable to try to minimize it, it is essential that the risks taken be the right risks.

-- Peter F. Drucker

After all evaluative criteria (values, policies and facts) have been carefully defined from research, governing board action, and the concerns analysis, a match-mismatch must be performed to identify discrepancies among them. It is these discrepancies or inconsistencies that constitute validated needs. The facts, values and policies serve as the evaluative criteria for use in the conduct of a need assessment.

Essentially, the need assessment consists of systematically applying the evaluative criteria to each of the harvested concerns. Subjecting each concern to the criteria is essentially a winnowing process because as a concern is found to be inadequate, it must either be discarded or else modified until it is adequate.

I. SPECIFIC TESTS TO BE APPLIED

Some of the specific tests that each concern must be subjected to are as follows:

1. Checking for Accuracy--Making sure the concern is an accurate expression of conditions; that is, is it consistent with the facts, either in the data bank that has been compiled or from some other source?

   For example, is the concern:

   a. In harmony with existing facts and information?

   b. Consistent with trends and the forecasts of future developments?

c. Clearly stated so that no contradictions or ambiguity clouds its meaning?

d. Based upon "what is," that is, does it reflect reality in terms of relationships and total configurations as well as basic data?

2. Testing for Validity--Seeing that the accurately expressed concern is in fact a genuine need. That is, does it represent a valid discrepancy or deficiency in terms of the value bank or the district's operational philosophy of education. This test should also reveal whether or not this concern is a central need and not just a symptom, a peripheral expression, or a solution to the fulfillment of a more basic need that has yet to be identified.

For example, does the concern:

a. Show a difference between "what is" and "what ought to be?"

b. Reveal a harmony with the value bank (operational philosophy) in terms of its expression of "what ought to be?"

c. Describe a solution rather than express an unmet need or unresolved problem?

d. Reveal the real need rather than some symptom or some eccentric portion?

3. Determining the Extent--Discovering or measuring how much of a deficiency or discrepancy exists in the concern. Reference to the compiled data bank should satisfy part of this requirement and the value bank should then help place any given concern in its proper prospective. Thus the task becomes one of estimating the extent of the difference that exists between "what is" and "what is required."

4. Appraising Feasibility--Determining whether this concern can possibly be satisfied in a suitable manner under existing conditions and with the resources available. This procedure may also provide cursory examination of which of similar concerns might be considered in what particular sequence in order to be resolved most fruitfully.

5. Establishing Criticality-- Determining where this concern fits into a priority of all other concerns requiring attention. That is, a weighing procedure must be worked in order to determine which concerns should be satisfied first. Once again, in terms of all the evaluative criteria, it must be determined which concern is most crucial or which should be resolved initially for logical or strategic reasons. The end result of the test for criticality is a roster of all the concerns that have now been winnowed into priority needs. And, according to some specifications, all of these priority needs must be arranged in rank or hierarchical order according to importance or cruciality.

All of the procedures discussed in the concerns analysis and need assessment are presented diagrammatically in Appendix A. The reader is encouraged to refer to this diagram as a kind of summary of the contents of this and the foregoing chapters.

II. A CRITIQUE OF THE NEED ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

The need assessment procedure described in the preceding section of this chapter has been used in a number of states. Some insights as to how the procedure can be improved are provided by an external, independent evaluator who was employed to critique the process and resultant product. His recommendations were:

Procedure:

A definite procedure should be established which details:

1. Who will be the decision maker who ultimately decides the priority of needs? This could be an individual, or a committee, or even the project staff, or the Project Advisory Committee.
2. Who will actually implement the procedure for assembling priority data? i.e.:
    a. Who will produce data to indicate what portion or percentage of respondents perceived the need (or concern)?
    b. Who will develop data to indicate the degree of importance ascribed to each need (or concern) by the respondents?
    c. Who will determine, and how will it be determined, what degree of importance was attributed to each need (or concern) by the school staff?
    d. Who will determine, and by what means, the correspondence of needs (or concerns) to City, County, State, and Federal directives?
    e. Who will determine, and how will he determine, the relevance of needs (or concerns) to project objectives?
    f. Who will determine, and by what method will he determine, the degree to which the needs (or concerns) are accepted as important by the community?
    g. Who will determine, and by what means will the determination be made, that the needs (or concerns) are compatible with reality?

h. Who will determine, and how will it be determined, that the needs (or concerns) are perceived as important by knowledgeable individuals?

i. Who will determine, and what procedure will be used to determine, the total priority weight of needs (or concerns)?

j. Who will select, and by what method and what criteria will he select, the highest priority needs for which solution strategies will be developed?

This procedure could be carried out by an individual, a committee, a task force, or the project staff.[1]

---

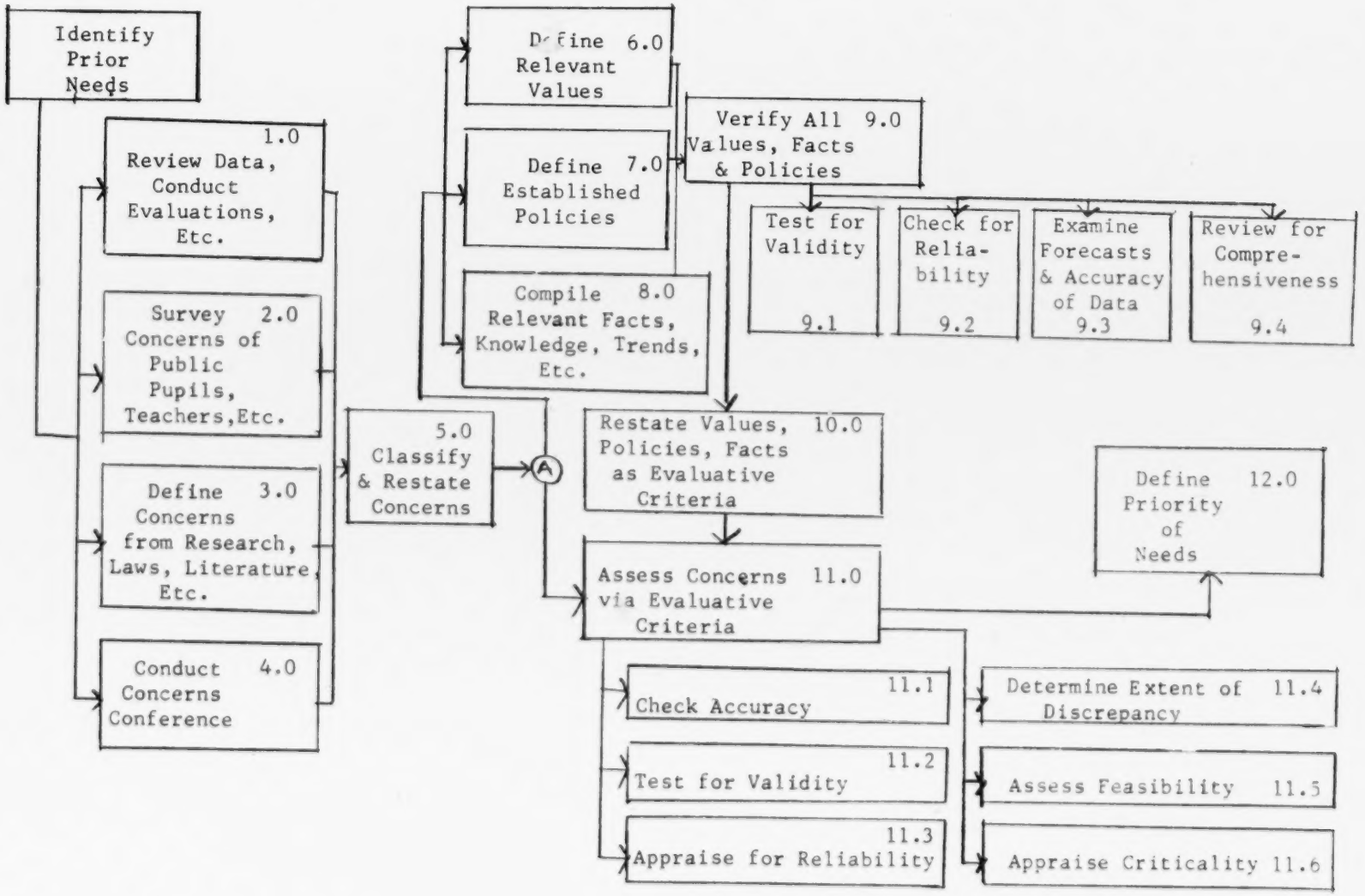
[1] Courtesy Project DESIGN, Fresno City Unified School District, External Evaluation Report Number 1, submitted by Lester W. Ristow, Acting Director, Division of Research and Pupil Personnel Services, Office of Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, February, 1969.

APPENDIX

DIAGRAM OF PROCEDURE FOR

CONCERNS ANALYSIS AND NEED ASSESSMENT

Figure 4. DIAGRAM OF PROCEDURE FOR CONCERNS ANALYSIS AND NEED ASSESSMENT. (Winnowing Concerns for Priority Needs)


Identify Prior Needs
1.0 Review Data, Conduct Evaluations, Etc.
Survey 2.0 Concerns of Public Pupils, Teachers, Etc.
Define 3.0 Concerns from Research, Laws, Literature, Etc.
Conduct 4.0 Concerns Conference
5.0 Classify & Restate Concerns
A
Define 6.0 Relevant Values
Define 7.0 Established Policies
Compile 8.0 Relevant Facts, Knowledge, Trends, Etc.
Verify All 9.0 Values, Facts & Policies
Test for Validity 9.1
Check for Reliability 9.2
Examine Forecasts & Accuracy of Data 9.3
Review for Comprehensiveness 9.4
Restate Values, Policies, Facts as Evaluative Criteria 10.0
Define Priority of Needs 12.0
Assess Concerns via Evaluative Criteria 11.0
11.1 Check Accuracy
11.2 Test for Validity
11.3 Appraise for Reliability
Determine Extent of Discrepancy 11.4
Assess Feasibility 11.5
Appraise Criticality 11.6